

IN THE MATTER of the Resource Management Act 1991

AND

IN THE MATTER of of an application pursuant to section 201 for a Water Conservation Order on the Hurunui River

**STATEMENT OF EVIDENCE OF ALISTAIR MOORE IN SUPPORT OF NZRCA
6 April 2009**

Evidence for the WCO Tribunal Hearing

1. I trained as a rafting guide in the summer of 1982/83 for a company called Danes Backcountry in Queenstown and rivers and rafting have been a big part of my life ever since. I have over 20 years of active involvement with the industry. I am now a Senior grade 4/5 registered guide as well as an industry assessor with the industry training organisation SFRITO. I run my own small rafting company called Rafting and Moore which is audited annually by Maritime NZ. I co-ordinate the rafting programme at Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology Outdoor courses which includes one year Certificate course and a two year Diploma course. I am also a member of the Executive Committee with the NZ Rafting Association (NZRA).
2. My log book shows I have spent 63 days on the Hurunui River over the previous eight years; 47 days raft guide training and 16 days commercial raft guiding. I estimate that I have done at least 10 days training, which has not been logged; bringing my total number of days on the Hurunui to 73 days in the last eight years. I have trained raft guides, and guided rafts on rivers both in New Zealand and overseas. In New Zealand the rivers I have rafted include the Buller, Maruia, Grey, Perth, Waiototo Landsborough, Shotover, Kawarau and Rangitata. I have rafted overseas in Australia, the United States, India and Nepal.

3. The NZRA is a non profit organisation made up of guides, operators and other interested parties. The Association was founded in 1996 to promote the sport of white water rafting to New Zealand and the world through collective representation.

The NZRA has been instrumental in the development of a recognised qualification for the white water rafting industry in New Zealand. This code of conduct has been adopted by the New Zealand government and implemented as Rule Part 80 of the Maritime Transport Act 1994. As a result of this New Zealand can now boast the very highest in world industry standards.

The NZRA is a resource of information for the industry in New Zealand. The association also organises training and rescue workshops. These incorporate all the latest equipment and rescue techniques from here and around the world.

The NZRA is governed by an executive committee, of which I am a member. Executive members represent companies and guides from all over New Zealand.

4. I have been responsible for running annual NZRA rescue workshops for four years and in November 2006 we based a rescue workshop on the Hurunui. These three day workshops are a great opportunity to share in the latest knowledge acquired from the rafting industry in New Zealand and from around the world. Running a rescue workshop on the Hurunui meant we could include elements of practical and theoretical learning, on a river that aided learning progressions from grade 1 easy water through to grade 3+. Workshops focus on developing participant skills in the following areas
 - * First aid scenarios
 - * River rescue scenarios
 - * Rope skills for rescue
 - * Risk management
 - * Heli-evacuations
 - * Search and rescue
 - * Rafting equipment
 - * Environmental management
 - * Group dynamics

5. I also run commercial raft trips on the Hurunui through my company Rafting and Moore, and for mid-grade rafting the Hurunui is a great day out. Possibly my most memorable river journey was assisting with an Oxford area school Coast to Coast trip where the students cycled, tramped into Lake Summer then I rafted them to the Culverden plains and then Canadian canoed to the Pacific ocean – a source to the sea on the Hurunui. This is an outstanding trip and only a few rivers have the qualities found on the Hurunui.
6. The only other rivers of a similar quality for rafting on the east coast of the South island are the Upper Waiau and the Ashley on the few days of the year it is navigable. The Ashley is only runnable occasionally and the Upper Waiau is a true remote helicopter access two or three day trip. So as a result gets rafted very infrequently.
7. The Hurunui is a very important rafting resource due to the variety of difficulty found along its length, ranging from the Grade 2 Jollie Brook section to the grade 3+ Maori Gully. All sections have easy road access but in an isolated alpine setting. For a true remote experience the Hawarden gorge above Mandamus can provide a wilderness feel to a rafting trip. Even the lower section below Balmoral reserve is a beautiful section of easy river. I have often taken beginner kayakers up from the State highway 1 Bridge and used this section for instruction.
8. The Hurunui has a great range of mid-grade whitewater features for training aspiring rafters ranging from class 2 to 3+. As the co-ordinator of the rafting programme at Christchurch Polytechnic Institute of Technology the Hurunui is a river I use regularly for raft training purposes as it has everything required for both the first and second year Polytechnic students. Second year students spend a full week every year on the Hurunui, and first year students go up for one to two days per year. In addition to this, students are encouraged to undertake self directed learning, and arrange for Polytechnic gear to run their own rafting trips to gain experience. The Hurunui is the students' favourite spot, as it's a day trip out of Christchurch. I have just recently spent four days camped at Jolliebrook with my second year students and spent time

instructing both raft guiding skills as well as rescue skills. We were fortunate that the river was flowing at 75 cumecs on the first day dropping away to 50 or so by day four. As a training venue at this level the Hurunui is as good as it gets anywhere in the world.

9. While the whitewater environment always poses some risk, the Hurunui is a relatively safe environment, where I have found it easy to set safety and scenarios to aid learning. Students learn to manage their raft on the range of grade 2 sections, and over a period of days, progress to negotiating larger river features and stronger currents on Maori Gully. You can always go rafting on the Hurunui and every flow is different. It is a smaller volume river than the Buller river, and provides more opportunities to learn how to manage a raft in tight technical water than the Buller does. The Hurunui does not have the same whitewater challenge as the Rangitata Gorge, which in some flows is considered a rafting grade 5. These features, combined with its proximity to Christchurch, make the Hurunui an extremely valuable rafting resource.

7. In my view the Hurunui has wilderness values for all to enjoy along the length of the Lake Summer road, and is a true mix of relatively easy access and remoter sections. The Hurunui is a great training river for rafting, and also ideal for family groups/social groups who want a day out on a raft within two hours drive of Christchurch. Also due to lake source it runs year round. The Hurunui is a nationally important rafting river as it is the only river of its type on the east coast of the South Island with assured flows and easy access; it encapsulates the splendour of the Canterbury highcountry.

Alistair Moore
Rafting and Moore New Zealand Limited
16 Bay Road, Oxford,
North Canterbury
New Zealand Phone
(03) 312 3393
Mobile 0274 502 700